

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY EUR/WE:MLDURKEE:MJK

APPROVED BY EUR - MR. LAINGEN

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 225906

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PBOR, SP, MO, AG, MA, SS, UN

SUBJECT: MOROCCAN AMBASSADOR PRESENTS SAHARAN CASE

1. MOROCCAN AMBASSADOR TO US BOUTALEB CALLED
SEPTEMBER 18 AT HIS REQUEST ON EUR DEPUTY ASSISTANT
SECRETARY LAINGEN TO PRESENT MOROCCAN CASE ON SAHARAN
DISPUTE. HE GAVE LENGTHY PRESENTATION ON HISTORICAL
AND LEGAL MERITS OF MOROCCAN CLAIM AND EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE
THAT ICJ OPINION WOULD SUPPORT MOROCCAN VIEW.

2. HE HAD HARD WORDS FOR SPAIN AND ALGERIA. HE SAID
SPAIN FOLLOWING SHORT-SIGHTED "WAIT AND SEE" APPROACH,
WAS ENGAGED IN VARIOUS INTRIGUES TO KEEP MOROCCO FROM
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RECOVERING ITS TERRITORY, INCLUDING COLLUSION WITH

FPOLISARIO, WHICH HE DESCRIBED AS LACKING ANY REAL SUPPORT IN SAHARA. HE ALSO SAID THAT SPAIN HAS BEEN MANEUVERING AT UN BY BLURRING DISTINCTION BETWEEN "INTERESTED AND "CONCERNED" PARTIES, FORMER BEING THOSE FAVORING LIBERATION FROM COLONIAL YOKE (HE SAID ALGERIA HAD ESSENTIALLY SAME CREDENTIALS AS A COUNTRY LIKE CUBA IN THIS CATEGORY) WHILE LATTER TERM APPLIED ONLY TO MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA, AS STATES DIRECTLY CONCERNED WITH THE TERRITORY.

3. HE WAS VERY NEGATIVE ON PROSPECTS FOR ANY FORM OF INDEPENDENT SAHARA WHICH, LACKING STABLE POPULATION OR OTHER NECESSARY ELEMENTS FOR VIABLE STATE, WOULD BECOME DEPENDENT ON OTHER STATES. THIS SITUATION COULD TURN OUT UNFAVORABLY FOR SPAIN, WHICH MIGHT SEE INDEPENDENCE STIRRINGS IN CANARY ISLANDS DEVELOP INTO SOMETHING MORE SERIOUS.

4. IN RESPONSE TO LAINGEN'S QUESTION, HE SAID ALGERIA WAS ALSO BEHAVING IN SHORT-SIGHTED MANNER OUT OF FEAR THAT MOROCCO WITH ADDITION OF SAHARA WOULD BE LARGEST AND RICHEST NORTH AFRICAN STATE. BECAUSE OF THIS PROSPECT, HE CLAIMED GOA WANTED TO KEEP SAHARAN SITUATION UNSETTLED IN HOPES THEY MIGHT EVENTUALLY GAIN ACCESS TO ATLANTIC AND SHARE OF SAHARAN PHOSPHATES FROM SOME PUPPET STATE.

5. LAINGEN ASKED WHETHER GOM SAW SPANISH ATTITUDE ARISING FROM PRESENT INTERNAL SITUATION THERE OR FROM FIRM DETERMINATION TO HOLD ON TO TERRITORY.

BOUTALEB RESPONDED THAT SOME SPANISH LEADERS (WHOM HE DESCRIBED AS FRIENDS OF JUAN CARLOS) HAD ADVISED GOM TO BE PATIENT AND WAIT FOR THE TRANSITION IN SPAIN, WHEN THINGS MIGHT BE EASIER. BUT HE ALSO FEARED THAT SPANISH EVEN AFTER FRANCO MIGHT PREFER TO SEE MOROCCO WITHOUT SAHARA.

6. LAINGEN REAFFIRMED US POLICY OF SEEKING PEACEFUL SOLUTION, WITH UN ROLE IF AND WHEN PARTIES AGREED.
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IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION ABOUT PROPOSED CONFERENCE UNDER UNSYG AUSPICES, BOUTELAB SAID MOROCCO HAD AGREED IN PRINCIPLE SUBJECT TO TWO CONDITIONS. FIRST, GOS MUST AGREE THAT CONFERENCE WOULD NOT DEAL WITH TURN-OVER OF POWER, SINCE OTHERWISE SPAIN MIGHT USE CONFERENCE TO PRESENT FAIT ACCOMPLI. SECOND, CONFERENCE MUST BE OPEN TO ALL PARTIES IN THE REGION, THAT IS, TUNISIA AND LIBYA. HE SAID SPAIN HAD REJECTED BOTH CONDITIONS

AND ALGERIA HAD OPPOSED PARTICIPATION BY TUNISIA AND LIBYA.

7. FINALLY, WHILE CAREFUL TO SAY HE HAD NO INSTRUCTIONS TO DO MORE THAN EXPLAIN MOROCCAN VIEW, BOUTALEB MADE PITCH FOR US TO HELP RESOLVE DISPUTE BY ADVISING SPAIN TO BE REALISTIC AND ACCEPT GENEROUS TERMS ALREADY OFFERED BY KING HUSSEIN. THIS WOULD SERVE LONG-TERM INTEREST

OF BOTH COUNTRIES BY REMOVING THREAT TO PEACE PERHAPS US COULD ADVISE BOTH SPAIN AND MOROCCO NOT TO TAKE ANY PRECIPITATE ACTION BEFORE END OF UNGA. LAINGEN REPLIED THAT US MAINTAINS FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH BOTH SPAIN AND MOROCCO AND HOPES THAT BOTH PARTIES WILL EXERCISE RESTRAINT. HE REITERATED THAT US FAVORS PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT AND BELIEVES UN MECHANISM COULD, IF PARTIES AGREED, FACILITATE SOLUTION. INGERSOLL

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